

Message Text

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17

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-04 CEA-01 AGR-05

/094 W

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R 211834Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1359

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION OECD PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UK, ETRD

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER WILSON ON IMPORT CONTROLS

REF: LONDON 7198

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. PRIME MINISTER WILSON APPEARED ON TELEVISION 11 MAY
AND IN HOUR LONG INTERVIEW WITH ECONOMIC JOURNALIST PETER
JAY (REFTEL) COVERED A NUMBER OF POINTS INCLUDING HIS
POSITION ON IMPORT CONTROLS. FOR THE RECORD WE REPORT
HIS COMMENT VERBATIM.

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2. JAY QUOTED SECSTATE FOR INDUSTRY BENN'S REFERENCE TO "MEASURES TO HELP BRITISH PRODUCERS COMPETE IN THE HOME MARKET" WHICH SHOULD HELP THE RESTORATION OF FULL EMPLOYMENT. JAY COMMENTED THAT THIS SOUNDS LIKE IMPORT CONTROLS AND ASKED IF THIS WERE GOVERNMENT POLICY. WILSON REPLIED AT LENGTH, CONCLUDING WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

BEGIN QUOTE: ON THE THIRD QUESTION, NOW WE HAVE REJECTED THE IDEA OF ARTIFICIAL INTERFERENCE WITH IMPORTS, EXCEPT, MAY I SAY, I DON'T RULE THEM OUT AT ALL IN FACT WE ARE EXAMINING VERY CAREFULLY CASES WHERE IMPORTS ARE . . . OVERSEAS EXPORTS ARE SUBSIDIZED. FOR EXAMPLE WE HAVE HAD IT IN THE PAST, WE HAVE GOT IT AGAIN NOW IN TEXTILES, IN CLOTHING, AND PERHAPS IN CERTAIN OTHER INDUSTRIES, AND ANY GOVERNMENT HAS THE RIGHT TO INTERFERE AGAINST THAT AND WE SHALL CERTAINLY DO SO WHEN THE CASE IS FULLY PROVEN. BUT, AS TO SAYING THAT WE SHALL SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS BY SAYING WE ARE GOING TO TAKE LESS FROM AMERICA, LESS FROM FRANCE, LESS FROM GERMANY AND SO ON, IT LOOKS A SUPERFICIAL EASY ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM. IT IS NOT SUPERFICIAL. IT IS NOT EASY. THE RESULT WOULD BE IN ANY CASE THAT IF PEOPLE COULDN'T BUY WHATEVER IT WAS THEY WANTED FROM ABROAD, THEY WOULD BUY IT FROM BRITISH INDUSTRIES WHO WOULD THEN HAVE LESS TO EXPORT. SO I DON'T THINK THAT IS AN ANSWER. WE ARE ONE OF THE GREATEST WORLD TRADING NATIONS, WE WOULD HAVE EVERYTHING TO SUFFER FROM A COMPETITIVE SCRAMBLE TO KEEP UP ONE ANOTHER'S EXPORTS. END QUOTE.

3. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE:

WE RAISED THE PRIME MINISTER'S COMMENTS WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE, WHO HAVE SINCE INFORMED US THAT MENTION OF AMERICA, FRANCE, AND GERMANY IN THIS CONTEXT WAS COINCIDENTAL AND SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN TO MEAN THAT CONTROLS ON IMPORTS FROM THESE COUNTRIES ARE IN THE OFFING. THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE INFORMS US THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WAS UNDOUBTEDLY REFERRING TO PAKISTAN AND TURKEY WHEN HE REFERRED TO SUBSIDIES PAID FOR EXPORTS OF TEXTILES.

END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RICHARDSON

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Message Attributes

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